

REMARKS

Claims 1-43 of the present application were pending. Claims 11-17, 19, 27-32, 34-36, and 42 were withdrawn from consideration. In the Office Action mailed October 30, 2003, claims 1-10, 18, 20-26, 33, 37-41 and 43 have been rejected. Claims 1-43 have been canceled, without prejudice, and new claims 44-86 have been added. For the reasons set forth below, the Applicants submit that all pending claims are in condition for allowance and allowance of the application is respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 USC section 102

In the Office Action dated October 30, 2003, claims 1-10, 18, 20-26, 33, 37-41 and 43 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,769,882 to Fogarty et al ("Fogarty '882"). Claims 1, 8, and 43 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,596,296 to Nelson et al ("Nelson '296").

Claims 1-43 have been canceled, without prejudice, which renders the aforementioned rejection moot. Applicant asserts that new claims 44-86 recite an invention which is neither taught nor suggested by Fogarty '882 or Nelson '296, either alone or in combination, and is thus patentably distinct in light of these references.

A new drawing sheet has been submitted to correct FIG. 5a. The illustration of FIG. 5a submitted with the formal drawings did not accurately depict the preferential expansion of material 28 which was originally disclosed in the informal drawing FIG. 5a filed with the present application. The new formal drawing shows the preferential expansion of FIG. 5a which was illustrated in the original disclosure and thus does not constitute new matter. The specification has also been amended to describe this preferential expansion. Since this aspect of the invention was shown in the original drawing submitted in the original filing of the present application, it is part of the original disclosure and does not constitute new matter.

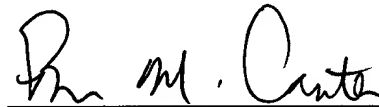
In view of the foregoing, Applicant believes the pending claims to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and early allowance are respectfully and sincerely solicited.

If it is felt for any reason that direct communication with applicants' attorney would serve to advance prosecution of this case to finality, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at the below listed telephone number.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any fee which may be required in connection with this Amendment to deposit account No. 50-1329.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 1/30/04



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